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Groton Area Schedule of Events

Monday, November 26, 2018

6:00pm: Wrestling: Boys JH Tournament vs. Faulkton Area @ Faulkton High School

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

3:30pm: Debate at Groton Area High School (Sippel Novice)

6:00pm: Basketball: Girls 7th/8th Game vs. Clark/Willow Lake @ Clark Junior-Senior High School (7th grade 6pm 8th grade 7pm)

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.



www.harrmotors.com

605-225-3078 ~ 1-800-658-3463

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Three score in double figures in 4-point victory over Chadron State

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 18 Northern State University men's basketball team capped off the inaugural Dacotah Bank Thanksgiving Classic with a 66-62 win over Chadron State on Saturday. The Wolves move to 4-2 overall, heading into NSIC action.

The Wolves out-scored the Eagles in the first 20 minutes of regulation, 34-24, with Chadron State storming back in the second. CSC recorded 38 points to NSU's 32 in the half; however, it was not enough to overcome the 10-point deficit at halftime.

As a team, NSU shot 41.5 percent from the floor, 30.4 percent from the arc, and 60.0 percent from the foul line. They out-rebounded Chadron State 42-28 in the game, and tallied a game high nine assists, five steals, and three blocks. Northern combined for 24 points in the paint, 16 points off the bench, ten points off turnovers, and nine points off ten offensive boards.

Ian Smith with 17 points and 11 rebounds, recording his first double-double of the season. Both were season highs for the senior, who shot 71.4 percent from the floor and added two assists. Justin Decker and Gabe King followed with 13 and 12 points respectively. Decker notched six rebounds, while King tallied four rebounds, one block, and shot 50.0 percent from the floor.

Bo Fries added eight points for the Wolves, as well as three rebounds, a team high three assists, and one steal. Mason Stark led the team off the bench with seven points, followed by Jordan Belka with four, Cole Dahl with three, and Parker Fox with two. Belka was second on the team with six rebounds, while Fox and Roko Dominovic each recorded four.

Northern will remain at home next Saturday for the NSIC opener versus MSU Moorhead. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m. against the Dragons from Wachs Arena.



**Thursday,
Nov. 29
5:30 p.m.
to 6:30 p.m.**

Groton Care & Rehab

1106 N 2nd St, Groton

Free Will Donation

Wolves drop non-conference tilt with #24 Emporia State

Emporia, Kas. – Wolves drop non-conference game to #24 Emporia State Saturday afternoon by a final score of 72-60. With the loss, the Wolves drop to 2-3 on the season heading into conference play next week.

Both teams tallied runs in the first quarter, but we started the second quarter tied up at 16. Both teams traded baskets early in the second quarter before Emporia went on a 13-2, as NSU trailed by 11 heading into the intermission. Wolves shot 56.5 percent from the field in the first half, 50.0 percent from behind the arc, 12 assists on 13 field goals.

Wolves got the lead to nine with 2:39 left in the third quarter off a layup from Hardwick. Wolves trailed the Hornets by 10 heading into the final quarter. NSU cut the Emporia State lead to five off a three point shot by Kusler. That is the closest the Wolves could get dropping the contest by a final of 72-60. Wolves finished the game shooting 38.6 percent from the field, 3-16 from behind the arc, and out-rebounded the opponents 38-32.

Brianna Kusler picked up her first double-double of the season with 11 points, and 10 rebounds, she also recorded six assists on the game. Anika Fredrick also scored in double figures for the first time this year with 10 points, two rebounds, and two assists. Lexi Wadsworth scored nine points, tallied seven rebounds, picked up two assists, and two steals. Sara Tvedt tallied eight points, six rebounds, and one assist in the game.

Brooke Luitjens was the last starter for the Wolves, she recorded five points, two points, four assists, and one steals. Alayna Johnson led the bench in scoring in the game with six points, three rebounds, and two assists. Tori Mekash scored four points, three rebounds, and two assists in the loss. Zoe Hardwick tallied four points and two rebounds off the bench. Joie Spier scored three points and recorded two rebounds.

NSU opens the conference season next Saturday at Wachs Arena, as they match-up with MSU Moorhead. Tip-off is scheduled for 4 p.m. against the Dragons.



**Olive Grove's 3rd Annual
Christmas
Tour of Homes
& Holiday Party**

**Saturday,
Dec. 1, 2018
Tour of Homes
4-7 p.m.**

**Gary & Linda Thurston
Alan Strom and Shelly Lerew
Ron and Dawn Breedlove
Olde Bank 'n Café
J. Simon Photography**

**Coffee, Apple Cider and
goodies at the clubhouse**

**Holiday Party
4 p.m. to Close**

**A variety of snacks served
Silent Basket Items - Bidding
closes at 8:30 p.m.
Live Auction begins at 8:30 p.m.**

**\$15 Tickets Available at
Lori's Pharmacy, Groton
Groton Ford
Hair & Company, Aberdeen**

**Come on out for a fun evening!
Support your local golf course!**

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2018 South Dakota All-Star Volleyball match.

The match will be played at the Sanford Pentagon at 2:00 pm on Sunday, December 2nd.
The All-Star match is being held along with the SD Miss Volleyball Banquet on Saturday evening.

South All-Stars

Head Coach – Deb Thill - Mitchell
Assistant Coach – Amy Tyler - Wagner

- AA Chelsea Brewster = Mitchell
- AA Brooklyn Bollweg - Harrisburng
- AA Leah Koltz – SF Roosevelt
- AA Mandy Schmidt - Mitchell

- A Kylie VanEgdom – SF Christian
- A Faith Tyler - Wagner
- A Karly Marx – Elk Point/Jefferson
- A McKenna Kranz – McCook Central/Montrose
- A Grace Leberman - Parker

- B Hanna Reiff - Chester
- B Karly Gustafson - Ethan
- B Noelle Hofer - Canistota

North All-Stars

Head Coach – Jill Kratovil - Madison
Assistant Coach – Anita Boeck - Arlington

- AA Phebie Rossi – RC Stevens
- AA Marlee Schneider – RC Stevens
- AA Mariah Gloe - Watertown
- AA Hollee Niehus – Huron (injured)
- AA Michaela Jewett – Brookings

- A Elise Brooks – Miller
- A Maddie Gerry – Madison

- B Laura Ochsner - Warner
- B Caitlyn Fischbach - Northwestern
- B Riley Grandpre – Northwestern
- B Abigail Grabowska – Ipswich
- B Jeryn Christensen - Arlington
- B Cylver Lurz - Philip

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Here to Serve

As a senator, much of my time is spent in committee meetings, voting on legislation and meeting with constituents. However, a major part of the job is to assist people with navigating the complex federal bureaucracy. In fact, "casework," as it's called, is a primary focus of our South Dakota offices.

South Dakotans having trouble getting answers from a federal agency are welcome to contact my offices in Pierre, Sioux Falls, Rapid City or Aberdeen for assistance. Staff members in our South Dakota offices are specially trained to act as liaisons between constituents and federal government agencies. Our goal is to clear up some of the red tape so the federal government can work to fix the issue you are having trouble with.

The majority of our casework is related to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is followed closely by immigration casework. However, we also work on many other issues, so if you are having a problem with any other federal agency, please contact us.

We have had a number of success stories, which is always our goal. A veteran from Hot Springs contacted us recently seeking assistance to receive his retroactive pay from the VA and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) for his disability payments from 2005 to 2008. The VA refused to pay their portion until DFAS paid theirs. DFAS claimed they didn't owe anything to the veteran and refused to perform an audit from 2005 to 2008 because, according to their records, the claim was already completed. We worked to prove the audit occurred before changes to his disability took effect, therefore it did not show a change in his disability rating. The VA then corrected the veterans' account, and the veteran ultimately received his retroactive payment. Because working around the federal bureaucracy can be frustrating and complicated, I encourage you to reach out to us for assistance if you are having problems.

You may have also heard about the case involving a World War II veteran, Sylvan Vigness of Flandreau, who was wounded during a kamikaze attack while on board the U.S.S. Hinsdale. His family contacted us seeking the Purple Heart for Mr. Vigness. We were able to intervene on his behalf by sending a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, Richard Spencer. Finally, at age 94, Mr. Vigness was awarded the Purple Heart in January of this year. The award was long overdue, but watching him receive the award and seeing all of his family and friends there to support him was one of the highlights of my job as a senator. We were pleased that his family was able to recognize his sacrifice for our country before he passed away earlier this year.

Our staff members who handle casework are available every week day. Appointments aren't necessary—simply walk in, give us a call or send an email through our website. We also hold regular mobile office hours in towns across the state. Our team enjoys having citizens stop in to talk about an issue you may be facing. Mobile office hours are always posted in advance on my Facebook page, which can be found at www.facebook.com/SenatorMikeRounds. We also share our mobile office hours with local newspapers, so keep an eye out to see if we're in your town soon! You can stop by to simply say hello and share your thoughts about the work we're doing. We welcome your feedback, as it helps me to make better decisions for you in the Senate.

If you'd like to contact any of my offices for any reason at all, the contact information is on my website, www.rounds.senate.gov. My team works closely together across the state and in Washington, and we strive to provide a timely response to everyone who contacts us, particularly if it is an urgent matter in which we are able to intervene.

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Making Progress on Teacher Pay

As I enter my final weeks as governor, many people are asking me to reflect on my time in office. I'm not a person who worries much about a "legacy." I just hope that I have left things a little better than I found them. It is hard, though, not to reminisce about the events of the last eight years. One memory of which I'm very proud is the progress we made on teacher pay.

It certainly didn't look like this would be possible when I came into office in 2011. At that time, South Dakota was still feeling the effects of the Great Recession. For two years, federal stimulus funds had delayed the need for budget cuts. As I took office, though, those funds had reached their end, and my first budget proposal included ten percent cuts. In the end, a mechanism was found to ease the K-12 education cut to about eight percent.

Despite funding challenges, I knew that our state needed to do more to attract and retain good classroom teachers. In 2012, I announced the "Investing in Teachers" initiative, which became known as "House Bill 1234." This proposal included merit-based bonuses for top teachers, along with pay incentives for teachers in high-need fields like mathematics and science. The plan proved to be controversial. Some educators were concerned about how they would be evaluated. They didn't want to pit teachers against each other. They also felt that it wasn't well-funded enough to have an impact. In the end, the plan narrowly passed the State Legislature, but was referred to the general election ballot and defeated.

I learned a valuable lesson from House Bill 1234. Although my intentions were good, I didn't do enough to reach out and build support. To most South Dakotans, the announcement in my State of the State Address was a surprise. A surprise can make for good drama, but it isn't always the recipe for success.

Following my reelection in 2014, I decided to try again. I was hearing from educators that the shortage of teachers was reaching a critical point. South Dakota had been last in the nation in teacher pay for decades – since the mid-1980s – and we were falling further behind. As the Baby Boomer generation retired, many vacancies were failing to attract a qualified applicant.

In 2015, I convened the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Teachers and Students. My charge to the task force was to seek public input, analyze the data, define conditions, and offer solutions. Nothing should be taken off the table. The task force included legislators, state officials, educators, and taxpayers. Task force members received input from thousands of South Dakotans, and delved into the issue at several public meetings.

In the end, the task force issued a report that called for several changes to the school funding formula. The changes made the formula more favorable to small school districts and more equitable across all districts. It also protected property taxpayers from runaway increases in capital outlay tax levies.

The report also called for a sizable funding increase for K-12 schools, to be targeted at teacher salaries. Based on that report, I decided to propose a half-cent increase in the state sales tax to fund the proposal. I knew this would be controversial, and I respected the fact that some would not be able to support a tax increase. I believed, however, that the state had reached a point of no return – this was a problem we had to solve.

The Blue Ribbon package of bills passed the legislature with bipartisan, two-thirds majority support,

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and I signed them into law. Significant salary increases first took effect for the 2016-17 school year, and we made great progress. In one year, salaries had increased by an average of 8.8 percent. The Blue Ribbon legislation had set a target average salary of \$48,500, and in one year we had moved more than halfway toward that goal. Some small districts enjoyed the largest increases – Wall, Gayville-Volin and Mobridge-Pollock all increased salaries by more than 20 percent, and Leola increased nearly 30 percent.

It has been three years since the Blue Ribbon Task Force met, and this summer a review board met to consider our progress. They found that, for the first time in more than 30 years, South Dakota is not last in the nation in average teacher salaries. They also heard from superintendents that, although some positions are still hard to fill, we are seeing more qualified applicants and fewer positions remain vacant.

We still have work to do – education funding should always be a major topic of debate – but I am proud of the progress we have made. We need good teachers to prepare our young people for the future, and we've sent a message that we value the important work that they do.

South Dakota Maintains Highest Ratings with Moody's and S&P

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Standard & Poor Global announced it has reaffirmed South Dakota's AAA Issuer Credit Rating with a stable outlook.

"This is the highest credit rating a state can obtain," said Gov. Daugaard. "By sticking to conservative budget practices and keeping our reserves at 10 percent of our annual budget, South Dakota continues to benefit from the highest rating possible. We've worked hard to place our state on a firm financial footing, and that stewardship has paid dividends."

In the report, S&P reflects on the state's expanding and diverse economy, strong revenue and economic trends, well-funded pension system, low debt, strong level of reserve funds, and a conservative and balanced budget requirement as key reasons for reaffirming the state's AAA rating. The state general fund budget for fiscal year 2018 ended with a \$16.9 million surplus, from both lower expenditures and higher revenues than budgeted. S&P has reported a stable outlook for the state due to structural budgetary alignment and stable economic metrics.

S&P has awarded the state a AAA rating since 2015.

Last week Moody's Investors Service announced South Dakota will maintain its AAA Issuer Rating with a stable outlook.

"This type of rating demonstrates our state's exceptional credit worthiness to financial markets, and leads to substantial savings in future interest payments," Gov. Daugaard said.

Credit ratings give potential bond purchasers a measurement of state performance and credit worthiness. Upgrades typically allow issued bonds to carry a lower interest rate, providing interest savings to issuers as well as the State of South Dakota and taxpayers.

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NSU Choirs to hold Holiday Concert on Nov. 29

ABERDEEN, S.D. – The Northern State University choirs will come together to celebrate the holiday season, offering their annual holiday choral concert at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 29 at First Presbyterian Church in Aberdeen.

The NSU Concert Choir, Chamber Singers and Early Musick Ensemble will join forces to perform multi-cultural works, primarily performed by the Concert Choir, alongside many holiday works.

Concert Choir will perform "Jai Ho!" arranged by Ethan Sperry; "Jabberwocky" by Sam Pottle; "Samo se karare" arranged by T. Woods; "The Battle of Jericho" arranged by Moses Hogan; "Alleluia" by Ralph Manuel; "Come, Colours Rise" by Grant McLachlan; "E'en So Lord Jesus Quickly Come" by Paul Manz; "The Snow" by Edward Elgar; and "Chris'mas Present for Sallie" by Leonard de Paur.

Chamber Singers will perform "Ave Maris Stella" by Trond Kverno; "There is No Rose of Such Virtue" by Robert H. Young; and "Es ist ein Ros entsprungen" by Hugo Distler."

The Early Musick Ensemble will perform "When David Heard" by Thomas Weelkes; "Il est bel et bon" by Passereau; and "Tant Que Vivray" by Claude Semisy.

Other songs being performed include "Exultate Justi" by Ludovico da Viadana, as well as two anonymous Spanish carols from the 16th century, titled "Riu, Riu, Chiu" and "Dadme albricias, hijos d'Eva."

The NSU Concert Choir, Chamber Singers and Early Musick Ensemble are directed by Dr. Timothy Woods. Admission is a freewill donation to NSU music scholarships at the door. NSU students are admitted for free. First Presbyterian Church is located at 318 S. Kline St.

Students involved in the concert are listed below by vocal part.

Sopranos:

Abby Arhart, Fort Pierre
Christina Beusch, Aberdeen
Taylor Brekke, Mobridge* #
Kylee Carlson, Aberdeen
Tierra Decker, Huron *@
Darby Duncan, Mellette
Annabelle Eastman, Aberdeen #
Kailey Fliehs, Aberdeen
Shelby Glover, Sioux Falls
Mariah Graff, Madison
McKinley Hoselton, Richardton, N.D. *
Kori Kerwin, Chamberlain *
Sara Krebsbach, Rockford, Minn. @
Gayhun Lee, Busan, South Korea
Kyra Liebig, Yankton
Rebecca Loehrer, Milbank
Mackenzie Lutz, Henry
Laurelyn Joy Marmorstein, Aberdeen *
Amanda McIlravy, Philip *#
Morgan Mewes, Jamestown, N.D.
Jaci Mollman, Spearfish
Christine Powers, Hot Springs *
Qi An, Gansu, China
Brittany Quinn, Timber Lake
Gillian Roda, Buffalo Gap
Megan Serr, Aberdeen
Loretta Simons, Seneca
Tyra Steinwand, Ellendale, N.D. *#

Rosemary Vega, Chaska, Minn. *#
Livia Wallace, Pipestone, Minn.
Morgan Wilson, Rapid City #
Annie Woodmansey, Pierre *
Wang Wei Yi, Cheng Du, Sichuan, China

Altos:

Taylor Bogue, Aberdeen
Tayzia Claymore-Knight, Eagle Butte
Naomi Davis, Watertown *
Lindsey Friedrichsen, Huron *#
Anika Fredrick, Buffalo, Minn.
Grace Gasperich, Aberdeen *@
Chelsie Gehrke, Clark
Justice Haggin, Sioux Falls
SoHee Han, Incheon, South Korea
Marissa Hanley, Chester
Yurianna Jeong, Seoul, South Korea
Jaeyoon Jung, Ganeung, South Korea
Chaeyeon Kim, Daegu, South Korea
Kyndra Kranz, Watertown *
Jeemin Lee, Seoul, South Korea
Minyeong Lee, South Korea
Abbigayle Quinn, Cresbard *
Sierra Reed, Rock Rapids, Iowa
Joanna Schleich, Mitchell *#
Tabitha Schmidt, Huron *#
YouJin Shon, Seoul, South Korea
Brooke Thielbar, Hardwick, Minn. *#

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Sara Van Regenmorter, Dell Rapids
Brigette Weisenburger, Aberdeen @
Hattie Weismantel, Groton
Joni Willoughby, Midland *#
Grace Woodstead, Cooperstown, N.D. *#
Jennem Woolever, Grand Forks, N.D.

Tenors:

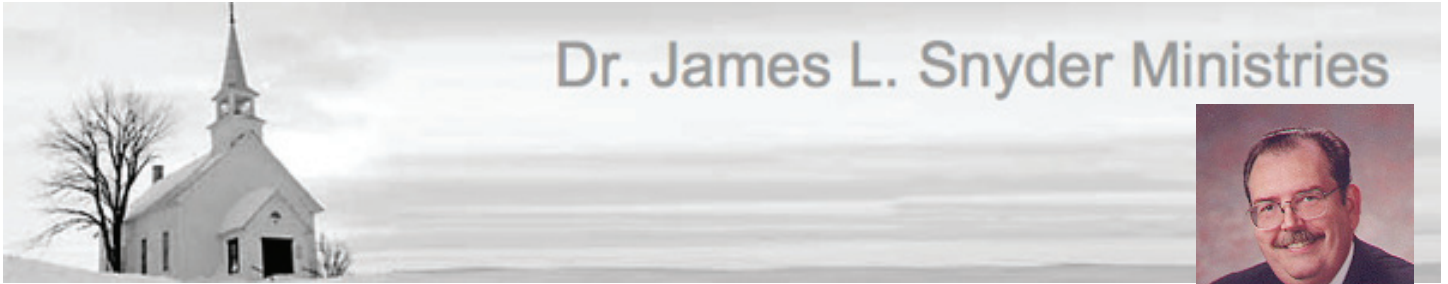
Tyler Beck, Leola
Louis Burley, Pierre
Patrick Calvillo, Walhalla, N.D. *#
Andrew Christofano, Hot Springs
Grant Duvall, Huron *#
Adam Henning, Watertown *#
Jaehyeok Heo, Busan, South Korea
Patrick Leigh, Waseca, Minn. *
Trey Litwiller, Huron *#
Michael Lytle, Rapid City *#
Patrick Minihan, Canton
Johnny Nguyen, Gregory *
Dylan Rausch, Yankton *#
Tanner Shabot-Shultis, Aberdeen *
Tyler Smith, Tea *

Basses:

Brandon Barrett, Britton *#
Seungjun Baek, Busan, South Korea
Kevin Boring, Pierre *
Cody Brower, Dimock
Mackinley Bruemmer, LaCrosse, Wisc. *#
John Cassens, Faulkton *
Matej Cip, Hodslavico, Czech Republic *
Bowen Feng, Zhengzhou, China
Ethan Fredrick, Buffalo, Minn.
Lucas Fredrick, Aberdeen #
Scott Glodt, Hoven *
Cody He Crow, Oglala
Dohyun Hong, Busan, South Korea
Alexander Kern, Groton
Jarret Martina, Willemstad, Curacao
Zach Martinmaas, Aberdeen *
Judah McKinley, Pierre *
Eduardo Mendoza, Canabamba, Bolivia
Kaeden Metz, Sisseton #
Cordell Ring, Onida #
Connor Stubbe, Aberdeen *
Justin Waldner, Hutterville
Jacob Wild, Aberdeen
Jong Ho Woo, Busan, South Korea
*Member of Chamber Singers
member of the Early Music Ensemble
@ accompanist

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It Was a Gobble-Gobble Kind of Day



I do not know about anybody else, but I truly enjoy Thanksgiving Day. It is not just because of the turkey that the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage prepares so brilliantly, although, I cannot think of any other reason.

Of course, there is the idea of family getting together. I enjoy that all the time. I like to hear the stories and get caught up with the latest happenings that have to do with my family.

I remember years ago good old Uncle Bud was my favorite uncle. He could tell a story that was so unbelievable that you ended up believing him.

Even today, I can remember some of the stories that he would tell and I could see now that he was exaggerating very well. I guess it's in our family.

So, it is wonderful to get together with family and get up-to-date with all the happenings in our family.

However, when it comes to Thanksgiving, my focus is on the marvelous food. Everybody in the family is to bring their special dish to share with everybody else. Some are good at baking pies, some at doing vegetable dishes (although this year we were not allowed to use lettuce), some at casseroles and a host of other delicious delicacies.

Here's what I like about a good old-fashioned family gathering at Thanksgiving. No matter what the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage says to me, I feel obligated to eat every dish brought in by a family member. After all, I surely do not want to embarrass anybody or shun them.

And, the best thing about this is, I need to have seconds and thirds and sometimes even more. After all, I do not want to offend anybody in my family.

I'm not sure, but I think everybody brought a pie. There were so many different pies on the table that I could not choose which one I wanted. Therefore, being the wonderful family person that I am, I took a slice of each.

My reasoning is simple, if it is a Thanksgiving dinner and the food is brought by family there absolutely no calories attached to it. That's my story, and I'm sticking to it!

Although everything else was rather delicious, I must say that the turkey was magnificent. And, as you might know, my wife prepared that turkey.

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She began the preparation for our Thanksgiving Day Turkey somewhere in August. There were some turkeys on sale and she scooped them up as much as possible. After all, she wanted to make sure she had enough turkey for everyone. And, according to her, it is against family rules to leave the family dinner without taking leftovers with you.

To prepare for this, the turkey had to be huge. That meant two and maybe even three turkeys to be prepared. It took her days to cook the turkey. Since I have no cookery imagination, I am not sure how she cooked it or how long it took her to cook it. All I know is, the kitchen smelled delicious for several weeks.

Please, do not let this get out. But she had one turkey that was done and she put it on the shelf to cool down a little bit before putting it in the freezer. I looked at it. I thought it looked back at me. I looked at it again and I got to the point of nonresistance. After all, why should I fight with the turkey?

Very carefully I sliced bits of turkey where I thought nobody would notice it and walked away munching on very delicious turkey. My problem was, the turkey was too delicious and I was too hungry. I went back several times and cut off just a little bit so nobody would notice. The nobody that I did not want to notice, of course, was my wife.

I happen to be chewing on a bit of turkey when the wife came into the room and asked the question she always asks me, "What are you eating?"

"Oh," I said rather hesitatingly, "I'm just chewing on a little bit of meat I found in the refrigerator." I thought that would solve the problem and for a while it looked like it did.

I just got seated in my chair when she, looking at the turkey, said, "Did you get a piece of this turkey to eat?"

When you're found out, you're found out. And trust me, I was found out.

Not all the lying in the world could get me out of this predicament that I was in.

I thought I had come to the end. She had caught me with turkey in my mouth. I was sure I was in some deep trouble.

Then she said something that totally surprised me. "How was that turkey? Was it any good?"

I like to take advantage of situations so I said, "That was the best turkey I have ever tasted in my life."

With a smile, she turned and walked away. How I got away with that, I am going to have to ponder for quite a few days.

As I pondered my situation, I thought of a verse in Proverbs. "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (Proverbs 15:23).

I do not often say the right thing, but when I do, what a joy it is.

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Today in Weather History

November 1, 1999: High winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to around 55 mph caused some tree and building damage throughout Big Stone and Traverse counties. On Highway 10 west of Browns Valley, the high winds blew a semi-tractor trailer full of 12,000 pounds of meat off the road and into a ditch. High winds from 30 to 50 mph, gusting to near 65 mph also caused building and tree damage throughout central, north central, and northeast South Dakota. In Eureka, the high winds blew down a large part of the ballpark fence. In Mellette, a 250-foot diameter grain bin under construction also received some damage from the winds.

November 1, 2000: A tornado event on the 1st of November was a rare and unusual weather phenomenon to occur so late in the year in North Dakota. Several tornadoes, with five distinct paths, hit south-central North Dakota causing property damage and injuries. The majority of the damage and injuries occurred in the Bismarck area. Forty-two homes suffered minor to moderate damage. The tornadoes were rated F0 and F1, packing winds up to 90 mph. Another unusual phenomenon, these tornadoes traveled from east to west. The track was caused by a strong low-pressure system, centered over north-central South Dakota, spinning counterclockwise, allowing the low-level flow over Bismarck to move east to west. At the same time these tornadoes were occurring, snow began to fall in the far western area of North Dakota. Winter storm watches and warnings were posted across north-west and central North Dakota that afternoon. Before this, the last recorded tornado to occur in the state was October 11th, 1979 in Sargent County in southeast North Dakota.

1755: A magnitude 8.7 earthquake devastated the city of Lisbon, Portugal on this day, killing as many as 50,000 people. The epicenter was located 120 miles west-southwest of Cape St. Vincent. Many individuals who sought safety on the Tagus River were killed by an estimated 20-foot tall tsunami that struck 40 minutes after the earthquake.

1848: When Joseph Henry came to the Smithsonian, one of his priorities was to set up a meteorological program. In 1847, while outlining his plan for the new institution, Henry called for "a system of extended meteorological observations for solving the problem of American storms." By 1849, he had budgeted \$1,000 for the Smithsonian meteorological project and established a network of some 150 volunteer weather observers. A decade later, the project had more than 600 volunteer observers, including people in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Its cost in 1860 was \$4,400, or thirty percent of the Smithsonian's research and publication budget.

1950 - A great storm hit the Northern and Central Appalachians with snow and high winds. Winds reached hurricane force along eastern slopes of the Appalachians, with gusts to 100 mph at Hartford CT, 110 mph at Concord NH, and 160 mph at Mount Washington NH. Heavy rain also hit the eastern slopes, with eight inches reported at Slide Mountain NY. The western slopes were buried under heavy snow. The storm produced record snowfall totals of 27.7 inches at Pittsburgh PA, and 36.3 inches at Steubenville OH. The snow, and record cold temperatures, resulted in 160 deaths. (25th-26th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1970 - The temperature at Tallahassee, FL, dipped to 13 degrees, following a high of 40 degrees the previous day. The mercury then reached 67 degrees on the 26th, and highs were in the 70s the rest of the month. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - The Great Thanksgiving Weekend Blizzard hit Denver, CO. The storm produced 21.5 inches of snow in 37 hours, closing Stapleton Airport for 24 hours. The snow and wind closed interstate highways around Denver. Visibility at Limon CO was down to zero for 24 hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - An early morning thunderstorm in southeastern Texas produced high winds which rolled a mobile home east of Bay City killing two of the four occupants. Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in central and eastern Texas, with nine inches reported at Huntsville, and 8.5 inches at Wimberly. Snow fell across northern and central Lower Michigan, with totals ranging up to nine inches at Cadillac. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today



Partly Sunny

High: 27 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 6 °F

Monday



Partly Sunny

High: 18 °F

Monday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 1 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 20 °F

Today: Partly to Mostly Cloudy, Highs 16-33°

Tonight: Cold. Lows Single Digits East, Teens West. Light Snow Possible Missouri Valley

Monday: Partly Sunny. Highs Teens East, 20s to Near 30 West.

Below Normal Temps through Midweek

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 11/25/2018 4:16 AM Central

Published on: 11/25/2018 at 4:19AM

Overall, it will remain cold over the region through the early part of this week. A weak system may bring light snow to the Missouri River valley tonight.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 31 °F at 12:16 AM

Low Outside Temp: 22 °F at 5:48 AM

High Gust: 21 mph at 2:38 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 64° in 1960

Record Low: -22 in 1996

Average High: 34°F

Average Low: 14°F

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.62

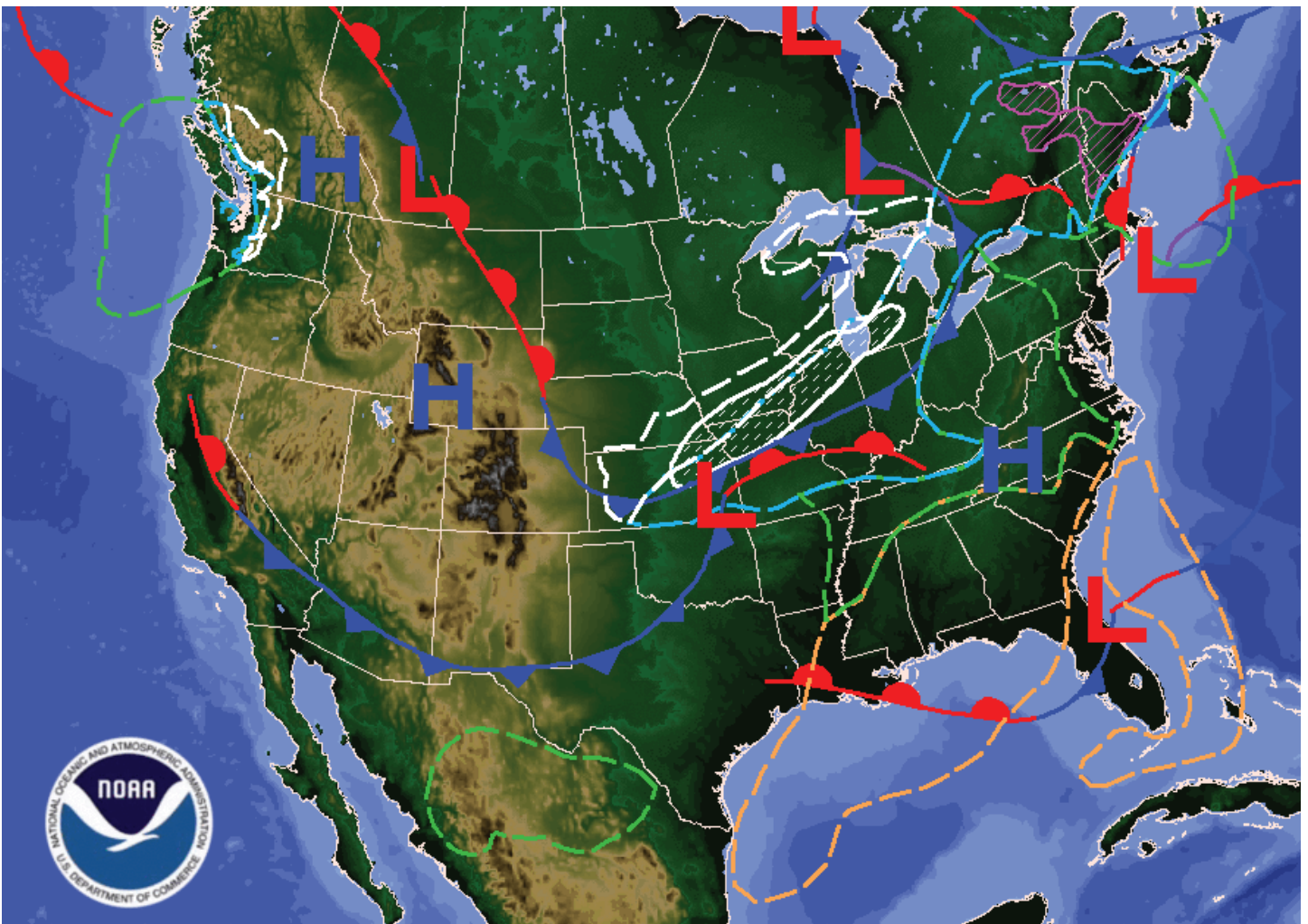
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.76

Average Precip to date: 21.09

Precip Year to Date: 15.81

Sunset Tonight: 4:55 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:47 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Nov 25, 2018, issued 4:15 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Hurley with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow
Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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RIGHT WAY - WRONG WAY

God created us to follow Him - not to forsake Him. He chooses for us triumph over temptation - not struggle with guilt for surrendering to sin. He wants us to walk with Him and not stray from Him because of our self-centeredness. He waits to help us achieve the potential He has given us and not be satisfied with less than what is possible. He is willing and able to share His wisdom and give His insights whenever we need to make any decision- if only we ask Him.

There are many wrong ways but only one best way - His way. And no one but God can reveal that way, His way, to us. We may search one way and then another, try this route, or another until it comes to a dead end. However, only when we allow God to lead us will we be in the center of His will.

Israels experience during the Exodus gives us a great example of Gods guidance and guardianship.

The Psalmist gives us a vivid picture of what can happen when people try to make it on their own and do not follow God: Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. Some were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away. How sad. How true. Without Gods guidance, we are all wanderers!

Then they cried out to the Lord! And listen to what happened. He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.

No one will ever find a straight way to a safe place in life unless they surrender their life to God and follow Him. Life without God is a wasteland, and unless we accept His salvation, our lives will ebb away.

Prayer: Lord, we come to You and ask You to save us from our sins and then lead us safely into Your presence. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 107:7 He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- Nov./Dec./Jan./Feb./Mar. Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meat- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 1/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 4/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 5/4/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 9/7/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2018 Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/10/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/01/2018 Olive Grove Golf Course 2018 Holiday Party
- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

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News from the  Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Saturday:

Dakota Cash
03-08-11-17-28
(three, eight, eleven, seventeen, twenty-eight)
Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America
01-10-11-17-28, Star Ball: 1, ASB: 2
(one, ten, eleven, seventeen, twenty-eight; Star Ball: one; ASB: two)
Estimated jackpot: \$11.87 million

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$172 million

Powerball
11-33-51-56-58, Powerball: 18, Power Play: 2
(eleven, thirty-three, fifty-one, fifty-six, fifty-eight; Powerball: eighteen; Power Play: two)
Estimated jackpot: \$155 million

Rapid City house fire gravely injures 1, displaces 4

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A house fire in Rapid City that left one person with life-threatening injuries has displaced four of the home's occupants.

The Rapid City Journal reports that the fight to contain the early Friday fire took about 30 minutes. Police and fire officials were able to locate all of the occupants of the home.

Officials haven't yet identified the person who was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries. Crews were investigating the cause of the fire. No injuries to firefighters were reported.

The house appeared to be a total loss.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

ND ambulance services to participate in memorial procession

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — At least 39 North Dakota ambulance services plan to participate in a Monday procession as part of a memorial for three people killed in an air ambulance crash near Bismarck.

Ambulances from districts across the state are set to appear in the procession, said Kelly Dollinger, president of the North Dakota Emergency Medical Services Association.

"You're not going to keep them away," he said. "This is an EMS family."

Dollinger told the Bismarck Tribune he expects the number of participants to grow. He said the procession is also "bound to see" ambulances from other states such as Minnesota, Montana and South Dakota.

The air ambulance crashed into a farm field shortly after taking off from Bismarck on Nov. 18. The crash killed all three people on board: 48-year-old pilot Todd Lasky and 63-year-old nurse Bonnie Cook, both of Bismarck, and 47-year-old paramedic Chris Iverson, of Mandan. The twin-engine plane was flying to Williston to pick up a patient.

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The Civil Air Patrol said an initial analysis by an Air Force rescue center indicated the Cessna 441 turbo-prop might have broken up in midair.

Rev. Greg Carr, lead chaplain for Crisis Care Chaplaincy, said the public service in Bismarck will give people a chance to grieve and remember those who died in the crash. Carr said seating is planned for about 3,100.

"I think it's awesome to see all of the departments, EMS, fire correctional, every first response group come together, the medical group, having all of these people come together and support one another is one of the most heartfelt things I've seen in my entire life," Carr said. "It's just beautiful."

Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

Man convicted in South Dakota crash dies in Nebraska

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A man convicted of manslaughter in South Dakota has died after serving more than 16 years in a Nebraska prison.

The Department of Correctional Services says 57-year-old Daniel Stetter died Friday afternoon at a Lincoln hospital, where he was being treated for long-term medical conditions.

Stetter was convicted of manslaughter, two counts of first-degree assault and driving in intoxicated in South Dakota. He was arrested after a 1991 crash that killed one person and injured two others.

Stetter was transferred to the Nebraska State Penitentiary in April 2002.

No final report 1 year after Keystone oil leak

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — It's been a year since the Keystone pipeline leaked about 407,000 gallons of oil in northeastern South Dakota, and while the issue has been mitigated, a final federal investigation report has yet to be released.

The rural Marshall County site has been cleaned up, but there's still no final investigation report from the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, The Aberdeen News reported .

The Nov. 28, 2017 Keystone leak is the seventh-largest onshore oil or petroleum product spill since 2010. The pipeline is owned by TransCanada and carries crude oil more than 2,600 miles from eastern Alberta, Canada, to Oklahoma and Illinois.

"While we firmly believe no incident is acceptable and deeply regret that this occurred, our teams executed our emergency response and cleanup procedures effectively, in close cooperation with regulatory agencies, community members and landowners," said Robynn Tysver, a spokeswoman for TransCanada.

The pipeline was likely damaged during installation during 2008, according to a July report from the National Transportation Safety Board, which is separate from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's report. The damage may have occurred when a vehicle drove over the pipe, causing it to weaken overtime.

The pipeline has had 14 leaks, most of which were minor, since it was commissioned in 2010, according to a federal spill database. TransCanada has worked to improve the pipeline's conditions, including unearthing a section of the pipeline about 15 miles north of the rupture site to perform maintenance.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

City Hall: Wireless providers eye public land for 5G towers

ST. LOUIS, S.D. (AP) — Wireless providers are targeting more than 20 locations on public land in Sioux Falls as future 5G cell tower sites, according to City Hall.

City officials are working to set up a licensing process to let Verizon Wireless and other telecommunication companies start putting fifth generation micro-towers on city light poles, water towers and buildings as soon as 2019, the Argus Leader reported . The Sioux Falls Power and Light Division unveiled the proposed licensing system this week.

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Companies would pay a \$500 application fee to affix cell towers onto light polls or other public facilities. If approved, applicants would pay \$25 for a permit.

Light Superintendent Jerry Jongeling said he can't disclose public locations being eyed for 5G towers until telecommunication companies formally file applications. He said people can expect them in "various areas" around the city.

It will be an applicant's responsibility to replace typical city light poles with sturdier versions that are strong enough to support the added weight. If a tower is damaged and must be replaced, the applicant would have to give the city a stock of replacement poles.

"Our team would go out there and replace the poll, get the street light working for street safety, and then we call Verizon and say, 'You're good to go to put your antenna back on it,'" Jongeling said.

The City Council is set to vote on the proposed licensing in the coming weeks.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

EU endorses Brexit divorce deal but hard work lies ahead

By LORNE COOK, JILL LAWLESS and RAF CASERT, Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Commission chief warned the U.K. parliament it should not count on any renegotiation ahead of Britain's departure in March, as European Union leaders on Sunday approved a landmark agreement on Britain's exit.

After the rubber stamping, all eyes turn to British Prime Minister Theresa May to sell the deal to her recalcitrant parliamentarians over the next days and weeks — a huge task considering the intense opposition both her Conservative lawmakers and the political opposition have voiced toward the deal.

It took leaders a matter of minutes at Sunday's summit in Brussels to endorse a withdrawal agreement that settles Britain's divorce bill, protects the rights of U.K. and EU citizens hit by Brexit and keeps the Irish border open. They also backed a 26-page document laying out their aims for future relations after Britain leaves in March.

At a bittersweet summit to mark the first time an EU nation is leaving the bloc, EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said "I don't think that Britain will be a third country like other third countries."

"There is, between us — something — which are the remainings of love," he said.

At the same time, he urged the British parliament to back the deal because nothing better will come to the table.

"I am totally convinced this is the only deal possible. Those who think that by rejecting the deal that they would have a better deal will be disappointed the first seconds after the rejection," Juncker warned.

The agreement paves the way for Britain's smooth departure from the bloc from the EU side, though a bumpy ride still awaits in the U.K.

In a formal statement endorsing the deal, the leaders called on EU institutions "to take the necessary steps to ensure that the agreement can enter into force on 30 March 2019, so as to provide for an orderly withdrawal."

The U.K. is due to leave the EU at midnight Brussels time on March 29.

EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said now that the first phase was done, Britain and the EU needed to work for "an ambitious and unprecedented partnership."

"Now is the time for everybody to take their responsibility — everybody," he said.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the deal — the product of a year and a half of often grueling negotiations between Britain and the EU — was regrettable, but acceptable.

"I believe that nobody is winning. We are all losing because of the U.K. leaving," Rutte said. "But given that context, this is a balanced outcome with no political winners."

The last big obstacle to a deal was overcome on Saturday, when Spain lifted its objections over the disputed British territory of Gibraltar.

The deal must still be ratified by the European Parliament, something parliament President Antonio Tajani

said would likely take place early in 2019.

Tajani said a "large majority" of European parliamentarians supported the deal.

More dauntingly for May, it also needs approval from Britain's Parliament.

May is under intense pressure from pro-Brexit and pro-EU British lawmakers, with large numbers on both sides of the debate opposing the divorce deal and threatening to vote it down when it comes to the House of Commons next month. Brexiteers think it will leave the U.K. tied too closely to EU rules, while pro-Europeans say it will erect new barriers between Britain and the bloc — its neighbor and biggest trading partner.

Pro-Brexit Conservative lawmaker Iain Duncan Smith said Sunday that May should demand new conditions from the EU. He said the deal as it stands "has ceded too much control" to Brussels.

May insists her deal delivers on the things that matter most to pro-Brexit voters — control of budgets, immigration policy and laws — while retaining close ties to the U.K.'s European neighbors.

May plans to spend the next couple of weeks selling it to politicians and the British public before Parliament's vote in December.

In a "letter to the nation" released Sunday, May said she would be "campaigning with my heart and soul to win that vote and to deliver this Brexit deal, for the good of our United Kingdom and all of our people."

"It will be a deal that is in our national interest - one that works for our whole country and all of our people, whether you voted 'Leave' or 'Remain,'" she said.

She said Britain's departure from the EU "must mark the point when we put aside the labels of 'Leave' and 'Remain' for good and we come together again as one people."

"To do that we need to get on with Brexit now by getting behind this deal."

See the AP's Brexit coverage at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Indian police map area of island where US man was killed

By ASHOK SHARMA, Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Police said they have mapped the area of a remote Indian island where tribespeople were seen burying the body of an American adventurer and Christian missionary after allegedly killing him with arrows this month.

But before they can even attempt to recover the body of 26-year-old John Allen Chau, authorities have to learn from experts "the nuances of the group's conduct and behavior, particularly in this kind of violent behavior," said Dependra Pathak, the director-general of police of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where North Sentinel Island is located.

During their visit to the island's surroundings on Friday, investigators spotted four or five North Sentinel islanders moving in the area from a distance of about 500 meters (1,600 feet) from a boat and studied their behavior for several hours, said Pathak.

"We have more or less identified the site and the area in general," Pathak said by phone on Saturday.

Indian authorities have been struggling to figure out how to get the remains of Chau, who was killed by North Sentinel islanders who apparently shot him with arrows and then buried his body on the beach.

Friday's visit was the second boat expedition of the week by a team of police and officials from the forest department, tribal welfare department and coast guard, Pathak said. The officials took two of the seven people arrested for helping Chau get close to the island in an effort to determine his route and the circumstances of his death. The fishermen who had taken Chau to the shore saw the tribespeople dragging and burying his body on the morning of Nov. 17.

Officials typically don't travel to the North Sentinel area, where people live as their ancestors did thousands of years ago. The only contacts, occasional "gift giving" visits in which bananas and coconuts were passed by small teams of officials and scholars who remained in the surf, were years ago.

Indian ships monitor the waters around the island, trying to ensure outsiders do not go near the Sentinelese, who have repeatedly made clear they want to be left alone.

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Chau went to "share the love of Jesus," said Mary Ho, international executive leader of All Nations. All Nations, a Kansas City, Missouri-based organization, helped train Chau, discussed the risks with him and sent him on the mission, to support him in his "life's calling," she added.

"He wanted to have a long-term relationship, and if possible, to be accepted by them and live amongst them," she said.

When a young boy tried to hit him with an arrow on his first day on the island, Chau swam back to the fishing boat he had arranged to wait for him offshore. The arrow, he wrote, hit a Bible he was carrying.

"Why did a little kid have to shoot me today?" he wrote in his notes, which he left with the fishermen before swimming back the next morning. "His high-pitched voice still lingers in my head."

Police say Chau knew that the Sentinelese resisted all contact by outsiders, firing arrows and spears at passing helicopters and killing fishermen who drift onto their shore. His notes, which were reported Thursday in Indian newspapers and confirmed by police, make clear he knew he might be killed.

"I DON'T WANT TO DIE," wrote Chau, who appeared to want to bring Christianity to the islanders. "Would it be wiser to leave and let someone else to continue. No I don't think so."

Chau paid fishermen to take him near North Sentinel, using a kayak to paddle to shore and bringing gifts, including a football and fish.

The Indian government lifted restrictions on traveling to the island in August, Ho said. She said she couldn't comment on why Chau arrived there the way he did, but that he carefully planned it.

All Nations contacted the U.S. Department of State, Ho said. She doesn't know yet whether it will be possible to recover Chau's body.

"We are just in grief and in shock about his death," she said. "At the same time, we consider it a real honor to have worked with him, to have been a part of his journey."

Scholars know almost nothing about the island, from how many people live there to what language they speak. The Andamans once had other similar groups, long-ago migrants from Africa and Southeast Asia who settled in the island chain, but their numbers have dwindled dramatically over the past century as a result of disease, intermarriage and migration.

Five fishermen, a friend of Chau's and a local tourist guide have been arrested for helping Chau.

Chau, whose friends described him as a fervent Christian, attended Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Before that he had lived in southwestern Washington state and went to Vancouver Christian High School.

In an Instagram post, his family said it was mourning him as a "beloved son, brother, uncle and best friend to us." The family also said it forgave his killers.

Authorities say Chau arrived in the area on Oct. 16 and stayed on another island while he prepared to travel to North Sentinel. It was not his first time in the region, as he had visited the Andaman islands in 2015 and 2016.

With help from the friend, Chau paid fishermen \$325 to take him there, according to Pathak.

After the fishermen realized Chau had been killed, they left for Port Blair, the capital of the island chain, where they broke the news to Chau's friend, who notified his family, Pathak said.

Associated Press writers Tim Sullivan in New Delhi and Jennifer McDermott in Providence, Rhode Island, contributed to this report.

Incoming Mexico gov't: No deal to host US asylum-seekers

By AMY GUTHRIE

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's incoming government denied a report Saturday that it plans to allow asylum-seekers to wait in the country while their claims move through U.S. immigration courts, one of several options the Trump administration has been pursuing in negotiations for months.

The deal was seen as a way to dissuade thousands of Central American migrants from seeking asylum in the U.S., a process that can take years. In effect, Mexican border towns are already acting as waiting

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rooms for migrants hoping to start new lives in the U.S. due to bottlenecks at the border.

"There is no agreement of any sort between the incoming Mexican government and the U.S. government," future Interior Minister Olga Sanchez said in a statement.

Hours earlier, The Washington Post quoted her as saying that the incoming administration of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador had agreed to allow migrants to stay in Mexico as a "short-term solution" while the U.S. considered their applications for asylum. Lopez Obrador will take office on Dec. 1.

The statement shared with The Associated Press said the future government's principal concern related to the migrants is their well-being while in Mexico.

The Washington Post reported Saturday that the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has won support from the Mexican president-elect's team for a plan dubbed "Remain in Mexico."

The newspaper also quoted Sanchez as saying: "For now, we have agreed to this policy of Remain in Mexico."

Sanchez did not explain in the statement why The Washington Post had quoted her as saying there had been agreement.

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said, "President Trump has developed a strong relationship with the incoming (Lopez) Obrador Administration, and we look forward to working with them on a wide range of issues."

Stephanie Leutert, director of the Mexico Security Initiative at the University of Texas at Austin, described the Remain in Mexico plan as a strategy to take away the ability of migrants to live and work in the U.S. while cases are processed. "The hope is that asylum seekers will not want to live in (Mexico) for months/years and won't come," Leutert said via Twitter.

U.S. officials have said for months that they were working with Mexico to find solutions for what they have called a border crisis. One variation, called "Safe Third," would have denied asylum claims on the grounds that asylum seekers had found haven in Mexico. President Enrique Pena Nieto offered thousands of Central Americans asylum on Oct. 26 if they agreed to remain in southern Mexico. Close to 3,000 migrants took Mexico up on the offer.

Sanchez said Saturday that the next government does not plan for Mexico to become a "Safe Third" country.

Approximately 5,000 Central American migrants have arrived in recent days to Tijuana, just south of California, after making their way through Mexico via caravan. But agents at the San Diego port of entry process fewer than 100 claims per day.

Tijuana Mayor Juan Manuel Gastelum on Friday declared a humanitarian crisis in his border city of 1.6 million, which he says is struggling to accommodate the influx. Most of the migrants are camped inside a sports complex, where they face long wait times for food and bathrooms. Hundreds of Tijuana residents have protested their arrival, complaining that recent caravans forced their way into Mexico from Guatemala.

Trump threatened Thursday to shut down the border crossing entirely if his administration determines that Mexico has lost "control" of the situation in Tijuana.

Julieta Vences, a congresswoman with Lopez Obrador's Morena party who is also president of Mexico's congressional migrant affairs commission, told the AP that incoming Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard has been discussing with U.S. officials how to handle a deluge of asylum claims at the border.

"They're going to have to open the borders (for the migrants) to put in the request," Vences said. "They will also give us dates, on what terms they will receive the (asylum) requests and in the case that they are not beneficiaries of this status, they will have to return here," Vences said.

She said Mexico needs to examine how to accommodate the migrants without angering locals.

"When they come back, we need to see how ... we can integrate them into an economic activity so that they can develop and not generate conflict with our own communities."

Local churches and charities have been feeding the migrants, with assistance from state and federal agencies. They have also distributed thousands of blankets, thin mattresses and personal hygiene kits.

Meanwhile, the government of the state of Baja California has identified 7,000 jobs for which migrants could possibly earn income while they await hearings in the U.S.

Trump took to Twitter again Saturday to reiterate that he plans to do away with the U.S. catch-and-release system, which allows asylum seekers to work and study sometimes for years while their cases are pending.

"Migrants at the Southern Border will not be allowed into the United States until their claims are individually approved in court," Trump wrote. "We only will allow those who come into our Country legally. Other than that our very strong policy is Catch and Detain. No 'Releasing' into the U.S..."

Associated Press writer Christopher Sherman contributed to this story from Tijuana. AP writer Colleen Long contributed from Washington, D.C.

Protesters march after death of man who wasn't mall shooter

By KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

HOOVER, Ala. (AP) — Protesters on Saturday marched through an Alabama shopping mall where police killed a black man they later acknowledged was not the triggerman in a Thanksgiving night shooting that wounded two people.

An officer shot and killed 21-year-old Emantic Fitzgerald Bradford, Jr. of Hueytown while responding to the Thursday mall shooting. Police said Bradford was fleeing the scene with a handgun.

Hoover police initially told reporters Bradford had shot a teen at the mall, but later retracted the statement.

"We knew that was false," said stepmother Cynthia Bradford when she heard police were blaming him for the shooting. She described her stepson, who went by E.J., as a respectful young man whose father worked at a jail for the Birmingham Police Department.

Hoover Police Captain Gregg Rector said investigators now believe that more than two people were involved in the initial fight ahead of the shooting, and that "at least one gunman" is still at large who could be responsible. Police said while Bradford "may have been involved in some aspect of the altercation, he likely did not fire the rounds that injured the 18-year-old victim." Rector said police regret that their initial statement about Bradford was not accurate.

The shooting remains under investigation, including whether Bradford played any role in the initial disturbance,

The unanswered questions stirred emotions in the suburb outside the majority-black city of Birmingham.

More than 200 demonstrators, including several relatives, chanted "E.J" and "no justice, no peace" as they marched past Christmas shoppers at the mall. They held a moment of silence at the spot outside a shoe store where Bradford was killed.

Family members described their horror of finding out from social media that Bradford was dead. Video circulated on social media of Bradford lying in a pool of blood on the mall floor.

Speaking to The Associated Press on Saturday night from his family's home, Bradford's father Emantic Bradford Sr. called his son, "a good kid, a very good kid."

Bradford Sr. said his son had a permit to carry a weapon for self-defense. He said he doesn't know exactly what happened at the mall, but said it was hurtful that police portrayed his son as the shooter.

"They were so quick to rush to judgment. ... I knew my son didn't do that. People rushed to judgment. They shouldn't have done that," Bradford Sr. said.

Family members said they plan to ask to see body camera footage from officers. Hoover police have not confirmed to the AP whether such footage exists.

Carlos Chaverst, an activist in Birmingham who organized the protest, said that when authorities acknowledged that the person killed was not the actual shooter, "that sent us in an uproar." More protests will be held in the future to hold officials accountable, he added.

"When we found out about this incident, there were questions from the jump. People were upset because a man was shot and killed by police in our own backyard," he said.

The incident began Thanksgiving night with a fight and shooting in suburban Birmingham at the Riverchase Galleria, a mall crowded with Black Friday bargain hunters. An 18-year-old man was shot twice and a 12-year-old bystander was shot in the back. Hoover police said Friday morning that the girl was in

stable condition.

The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency is investigating the incident since it is an officer-involved shooting. The Hoover Police Department is conducting its own internal investigation.

The officer who shot Bradford was placed on administrative leave while authorities investigate the shooting. The officer's name was not released publicly. The officers were not hurt.

Video posted on social media by shoppers showed a chaotic scene as shoppers fled.

A witness, Lexi Joiner, told Al.com she was shopping with her mother when the gunfire started. Joiner said she heard six or seven shots and was ordered, along with some other shoppers, into a supply closet for cover.

"It was terrifying," Joiner said.

Associated Press writer Chevel Johnson in New Orleans contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show that Bradford's father worked at a jail for the Birmingham Police Department and is not a Birmingham police officer.

Taiwan ruling party suffers major defeat in local elections

By RALPH JENNINGS, Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Taiwan's ruling party was handed a major defeat in local elections Saturday that were seen as a referendum on the administration of the island's independence-leaning president amid growing economic and political pressure from China.

Soon after the results came in, President Tsai Ing-wen resigned as head of the Democratic Progressive Party. She will remain as president and her resignation will have no direct effect on the business of government, although the results bode ill for her re-election chances in two years.

Rival China said the results reflected a desire of Taiwanese for better relations with the mainland. Ma Xiaoguang, the spokesman for Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office, said his government will continue to treat Taiwan as part of China and "resolutely oppose separatist elements advocating 'Taiwan independence' and their activities," according to the official Xinhua news agency.

In another victory for China, voters rejected a proposal to change the name of its Olympic team to Taiwan from the current Chinese Taipei. They also approved a referendum opposing same-sex marriage in a setback to LGBT couples, though ballot initiatives in Taiwan are non-binding.

The DPP lost the mayoral election to the Nationalist party in the southern port city of Kaohsiung, where it had held power for 20 years. The Nationalists also defeated the DPP in the central city of Taichung, home to much of Taiwan's light industry, while Ko Wen-je, the independent mayor of Taipei, the capital, narrowly won a second term. The Nationalist candidate in Taipei has asked for a recount.

At a brief news conference at DPP headquarters late Saturday, Tsai announced she was stepping down as DPP chair and said she had refused Premier William Lai's resignation, saying she wanted him to continue her reform agenda.

"Today, democracy taught us a lesson," Tsai said. "We must study and accept the higher expectations of the people."

The elections for mayors and thousands of local posts were seen as a key test for Tsai's 2-year-old administration, which has been under relentless attack from Beijing over her refusal to endorse its claim that Taiwan is a part of China.

Tsai and the DPP won a landslide victory in 2016, but China swiftly responded by cutting all links with her government. Beijing has been ratcheting up pressure on the island it claims as its own territory by poaching its diplomatic partners and barring its representatives from international gatherings, while staging threatening military exercises and limiting the numbers of Chinese tourists visiting Taiwan.

The Nationalists, known also as the KMT, had campaigned on their pro-business image and more accommodating line toward Beijing.

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Since her election, Tsai has walked a fine line on relations with China, maintaining Taiwan's de facto independent status that the vast majority of Taiwanese support, while avoiding calls from the more radical elements of her party for moves to declare formal separation from the mainland.

Taiwanese officials had warned that Beijing was seeking to sway voters through the spread of disinformation online similar to how Russia was accused of interfering in U.S. elections.

Although domestic concerns were in the foreground, China played a major factor in voter sentiment, analysts said.

"I think part of the reason for the vote on Saturday was concern about relations between Taiwan and mainland China," said Huang Kwei-bo, vice dean of the international affairs college at National Chengchi University in Taipei. "Their relations have slid backward."

Saturday's results also throw Tsai's political future into question. While the DPP still controls the national legislature, local politicians are crucial in mobilizing support among grass-roots supporters.

"I'm afraid it will be a big challenge for her in 2020," said Gratiana Jung, senior political researcher with the Yuanta-Polaris Research Institute think tank in Taipei.

Economic growth, employment and pension reforms were among key issues in the elections, which drew high turnout from the island's 19 million voters. Government employees who feel slighted by pension cuts that took effect in July probably mobilized against Tsai's party, Jung said.

Nationalist Party Chairman Wu Den-yih told reporters Saturday that his party would keep trying to avoid diplomatic friction with China and ensure smooth two-way trade.

"We hope the two sides will soon go back to a peaceful and stable trend in relations," he said.

Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists rebased their government to Taiwan in 1949 amid the civil war with Mao Zedong's Communists. They ruled under martial law until the late 1980s, when the native Taiwanese population began to take political office, mostly through the DPP.

The vote against changing the name used in international sporting events to Taiwan was seen as a test of support for independence. It was symbolic in nature, as the International Olympic Committee had ruled out a name change, which would be opposed by China.

Though referendums are only advisory, the vote in favor of restricting marriage to male-female couples will likely put lawmakers in a difficult position. They face both a court order to make same-sex marriage legal by 2019 and elections in 2020.

Rain tamps down California fire but turns grim search soggy

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE, Associated Press

PARADISE, Calif. (AP) — The catastrophic wildfire in Northern California is nearly out after several days of rain, but searchers are still completing the meticulous task of combing through now-muddy ash and debris for signs of human remains.

Crews resumed the grim work Saturday as rain cleared out of the devastated town of Paradise. Some were looking through destroyed neighborhoods for a second time as hundreds of people remain unaccounted for. They were searching for telltale fragments or bone or anything that looks like a pile of cremated ashes.

The nation's deadliest wildfire in a century has killed at least 84 people, and 475 are on a list of those reported missing. The flames ignited Nov. 8 in the parched Sierra Nevada foothills and quickly spread across 240 square miles (620 square kilometers), destroying most of Paradise in a day.

The fire burned down nearly 19,000 buildings, most of them homes, and displaced thousands of people, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said.

The two-week firefight got a boost Wednesday from the first significant storm to hit California. It dropped an estimated 7 inches (18 centimeters) of rain over the burn area over a three-day period without causing significant mudslides, said Hannah Chandler-Cooley of the National Weather Service.

The rain helped extinguish hotspots in smoldering areas, and containment increased to 95 percent. Despite the inclement weather, more than 800 volunteers kept searching for remains.

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Crews worked on-and-off amid a downpour Friday. While the rain made everybody colder and wetter, they kept the mission in mind, said Chris Stevens, a search volunteer who wore five layers of clothing to keep warm.

"It doesn't change the spirits of the guys working," he said. "Everyone here is super committed to helping the folks here."

His search crew went home to Orange County on Saturday after completing its assignment. Authorities also lifted evacuation orders for certain sections of Paradise.

In Southern California, more residents have returned to areas evacuated in a destructive fire as crews repaired power, telephone and gas utilities.

Los Angeles County sheriff's officials said they were in the last phase of repopulating Malibu and unincorporated areas of the county. At the height of the fire, 250,000 fled their homes.

Flames erupted Nov. 8 just west of Los Angeles and burned through suburban communities and wilderness parklands to the ocean. Three people died, and 1,643 buildings, most of them homes, were destroyed, officials said.

Associated Press journalists Olga Rodriguez and Daisy Nguyen in San Francisco and John Antczak in Los Angeles contributed.

New lander will add to humans' long fascination with Mars

By MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — In our solar system family, Mars is Earth's next-of-kin, the next-door relative that has captivated humans for millennia. The attraction is sure to grow with Monday's arrival of a NASA lander named InSight.

InSight should provide our best look yet at Mars' deep interior, using a mechanical mole to tunnel 16 feet (5 meters) deep to measure internal heat, and a seismometer to register quakes, meteorite strikes and anything else that might start the red planet shaking.

Scientists consider Mars a tantalizing time capsule. It is less geologically active than the twice-as-big Earth and so retains much of its early history. By studying the preserved heart of Mars, InSight can teach us how our solar system's rocky planets formed 4 1/2 billion years ago and why they turned out so different.

"Venus is hot enough to melt lead. Mercury has a sunbaked surface. Mars is pretty cold today. But Earth is a nice place to take a vacation, so we'd really like to know why one planet goes one way, another planet goes another way," said InSight's lead scientist Bruce Banerdt of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Today's Earthlings are lured to Mars for a variety of reasons.

Mars — "an incredible natural laboratory" — is reasonably easy to get to, and the U.S., at least, has a proven track record there, noted Lori Glaze, NASA's acting director of planetary science.

The cherry on top is that Mars may have once been flush with water and could have harbored life.

"Trying to understand how life is — or was — distributed across our solar system is one of the major questions that we have," Glaze said Wednesday at a news conference.

"Are we alone? Were we alone sometime in the past?"

In two years, NASA will actually seek evidence of ancient microbial life on Mars — if, indeed, it's there.

On Monday, the space agency announced Jezero Crater as the landing site for the Mars 2020 rover, which will gather samples and stash them for return to Earth in the early 2030s. The crater's ancient lake and river system is brimming with diverse rocks, making it a potential hot spot for past life.

Repeat, past life. NOT present.

Michael Meyer, NASA's lead scientist for Mars exploration, said the Martian surface is too cold and dry, with too much radiation bombardment, for life to currently exist.

Recorded observations of Mars — about double the size of Earth's moon — date back to ancient Egypt. But it wasn't until the 19th century that Mars mania truly set in.

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Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli began mapping Mars in the 1870s and described the observed channels as "canali" — Italian for channels. But with the recently completed Suez Canal on many minds, "canali" became understood as artificial, alien-made canals.

Adding to the commotion, the U.S. astronomer behind the Lowell Observatory near Flagstaff, Arizona, Percival Lowell, decided the channels were transporting water from the poles for intelligent civilizations living near the equator.

Lowell's musings influenced H.G. Wells, author of "The War of the Worlds" in 1898. The 1938 radio broadcast of the science-fiction novel terrified many Americans who thought Martians were actually invading.

Ray Bradbury's classic 1950 novel, "The Martian Chronicles," kept up the Mars momentum.

Fast-forward to the 21st century, and SpaceX founder and science fiction enthusiast Elon Musk is leading a real-life charge to Mars. He envisions hundreds of thousands of people streaming to Mars in giant SpaceX ships and colonizing the red planet in order to continue the species.

Just this past week, Musk revealed new names for the interplanetary ships and booster rockets: Starship and Super Heavy.

Musk is so passionate about Mars that he hopes to die there one day, although he stresses not on impact.

While NASA is holding out for its own Mars missions with crews, it has turned its more immediate attention back to the moon. An orbiting outpost near the moon could serve as an embarkation point for the lunar surface and even Mars, according to officials. It also would serve as a close-to-home proving ground before astronauts zoom 100 million miles to Mars.

All the observations and reports coming back from NASA's robotic explorers at Mars will help the human Mars pioneers, according to Thomas Zurbuchen, chief of science missions for NASA.

That's the charm of Mars, according to scientists.

Going to Mars is "a dream," said the French Space Agency's Philippe Laudet, project manager for InSight's seismometer. "Everything is captivating."

For AP's complete coverage of the Mars landing: <https://apnews.com/MarsLanding>

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Unique firefighting crew has common trait: Military service

By **ANDREW SELSKY, Associated Press**

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — After being in firefights in Afghanistan and Iraq, members of one of America's newest elite wildfire crews are tasked with fighting fires in rugged country back home.

On the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's only hotshot crew focused on recruiting veterans, members have traded assault rifles and other weapons of war for chain saws and shovels. But, like in the military, they have camaraderie, structure and chain of command. And the occasional adrenaline rush.

"Being in a firefight is way different than being in a wildland fire, but both are mentally taxing," said Chris Schott, who served two tours in Afghanistan with the Army's 7th Special Forces Group. "In a wildland fire, no one's shooting at you, but conditions can go favorable to unfavorable very quickly."

The Lakeview Veterans Interagency Hotshot Crew, based in Klamath Falls, Oregon, received its hotshot certification after rigorous training and testing, the Bureau of Land Management announced last week. It's now among 112 elite U.S. wildland firefighting teams and the only targeting veterans for recruitment, the agency said.

Crew superintendent Michael McGirr said he and other managers took then-President Barack Obama's initiative to hire veterans to heart.

"We felt it was important for them to transition back home," McGirr said.

Their maturity and ability to follow and lead are benefits that quickly became apparent when the crew started operating in 2012 as a lower-classification unit, McGirr said. Their military experience also means

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they're used to enduring tough missions.

"It's a lot of arduous hiking in nasty terrain," McGirr said. "The steeper the terrain, that's usually the ground hotshots are on."

Kenn Boles, a member of the crew since 2012 who did three tours in Iraq as a Marine, agreed that veterans can withstand the intense work.

"You're working hard, sweating; the fire doesn't stop because of those things," he said. "It's like in combat — just because you're hungry, tired and thirsty doesn't mean the firefight stops."

The crew is on leave and hasn't been battling the recent deadly wildfires in California.

Of the 25 positions on the crew, 17 are filled by veterans, McGirr said. There are three additional openings, and McGirr said he wants to recruit female veterans, too.

Schott, the Army veteran, said the crew felt they had the potential to achieve elite hotshot status after fighting fires in 2015, including one in Oregon's Crater Lake National Park that they almost had contained when winds picked up and changed direction, pushing the flames behind them.

They worked two weeks in a row, digging fire lines and doing prescribed burns to deprive the fire of fuel. After three days off, they worked another two weeks straight.

"After that, we thought we could be the first veterans hotshot crew in the nation," Schott said.

The crew usually works for nine months, with three months off.

"We spend more time together than with our families," McGirr said. "It's a grueling pace. We eat together, sleep together."

That creates a camaraderie that allows the veterans to share their wartime experiences with those who understand what they endured.

Boles lost a close friend a week after he left Iraq. That was the biggest contributor to post-traumatic stress disorder that hit him later, he said, describing it as "a lot of survivor's guilt." The veterans have each other's backs when PTSD issues arise, acting as a support group.

"Instead of bottling it up, we're really receptive to hearing people's stories and problems," said Boles, who was in the invasion of Iraq and in heavy fighting in Fallujah and Ramadi.

Schott, who served in Afghanistan's Urozgan Province north of Kandahar, said, "A lot of times you think, this can't get any worse. And yet you made it through."

He was in an operations center when he heard radio traffic about someone killed in action. It was his best friend.

"Myself, I was in denial for quite a long time about my PTSD," Schott said, adding that joining the crew and opening up to other veterans "helped me get my life back on track and where it needs to be."

The Bureau of Land Management is proud of the crew and efforts to develop a workforce of veterans, said Jeffrey Fedrizzi, agency deputy director for fire and aviation.

He said the men attaining hotshot status "demonstrates the exemplary quality and performance ingrained in this crew."

Follow Andrew Selsky on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/andrewselsky>

Natural disasters will be a priority for incoming governors

By GEOFF MULVIHILL, Associated Press

Governors have a wide range of priorities they want to tackle in the coming year, from tax reform to education. Yet it's a topic that receives less attention on the campaign trail and in their speeches that could determine their success — natural disasters.

In the last two years alone, storms and natural disasters have killed scores of people, damaged or destroyed tens of thousands of homes and cost tens of billions of dollars.

Wildfires in the West and hurricanes in the South have been especially destructive, and scientists say climate change is making this more common. As the severity escalates, governors are finding they have to make disaster planning a priority or risk the consequences of inaction defining their terms and enrag-

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ing voters.

Handling disasters and emergencies was a prime topic last week when the National Governors Association held a three-day seminar in Colorado that most of the nation's 19 governors-elect attended.

"As California's wildfires, a spate of hurricanes, and unfortunate acts of mass violence have demonstrated, such events can occur at any time," Scott Pattison, the nonpartisan association's chief executive, said in a statement, "including a governor's first day in office."

For many Democratic governors especially, the main concern is how climate change appears to be worsening the effects of natural disasters.

In California, half of the 10 most destructive wildfires in state history have occurred since 2017, and the costliest have been in each of the past three years, according to the state firefighting agency. The state has spent \$500 million from its emergency firefighting fund just since July 1, putting this wildfire season on pace to be among the costliest yet.

The state is dealing with its most destructive wildfire ever, a Northern California blaze that leveled a town of 27,000 this month, killed at least 80 people and left thousands homeless. That blaze, and another that roared through Malibu at the same time and left at least three dead, are the latest in a string of catastrophic wildfires that have put the state in what seems like a perpetual state of emergency.

Outgoing Gov. Jerry Brown has called California's mega fires "the new abnormal" as climate change turns the state warmer and drier.

The escalating destruction prompted state lawmakers to pass a series of wildfire-related bills this year. Among other provisions, they provide millions of dollars to cut trees and brush, make it easier for property owners to clear their land and require the state's utilities to step up their fire-prevention efforts.

During his campaign, incoming Gov. Gavin Newsom said wildfire planning would be a priority for his administration and outlined a number of steps he wants to take. Among them is a more aggressive approach to clearing trees and brush, particularly the state's millions of dead trees.

"I'd rather see our National Guard working on those kinds of emergencies than being on the border," Newsom told the nonprofit news organization CALmatters over the summer.

He also proposed deploying a network of infrared cameras to detect wildfires early, improving the emergency alert system and boosting funding for fire departments throughout the state.

A spokesman, Nathan Click, said Newsom is putting together a comprehensive wildfire strategy as he prepares to take office in early January. But the governor-elect also has been clear that the long-term goal must be reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

California's fire season has been especially severe, yet other Western states also have experienced ever-intensifying wildland blazes in recent years.

In Colorado, the two most destructive wildfires in state history erupted within the last six years, killed a total of four people and destroyed more than 850 homes combined. Both are believed to be caused by humans, leading Democrat Jared Polis, Colorado's governor-elect, to call for a public education campaign to reduce the possibility of manmade wildfires.

He also said the state should invest in programs to remove flammable debris and help communities and private landowners take steps to prevent the spread of wildfires.

Nearly 1 million people in Colorado live in areas considered to have at least some risk of a devastating fire. Florida has been hit with two deadly and destructive hurricanes in roughly a year's time. Hurricanes Irma last year and Michael in October caused tens of billions of dollars in damage.

Even without hurricanes, many coastal communities are dealing with flooding from high tides and storm surges. Incoming Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican, has already said he will work with local governments to address rising sea levels, but has been criticized by Democrats for avoiding any mention of climate change in his environmental plan.

DeSantis has said he is neither a climate change "denier" nor a "believer." That could be a problem for identifying long-term solutions to keep coastal communities safe, said Jen Hensley, the director of state lobbying and advocacy at the Sierra Club.

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She said one reason Hurricane Michael was so devastating was a lack of strong statewide coastal development standards.

"We're going to have to change zoning rules in coastal areas," Hensley said. "The reality is that those areas are more flood prone than they've ever been."

A massive federal report released Friday warns that disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes are worsening in the United States because of global warming.

It's similar in Texas, which has seen widespread destruction from hurricanes and where Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has been noncommittal about whether he thinks human activity is affecting the climate.

Texas has sought \$12 billion from the federal government for a 60-mile coastal "spine" of concrete sea-walls, floating gates and steel levees as a defense against future hurricanes and higher tides expected from climate change. That's just a fraction of the work the state estimates need to be done over the next decade to reduce the impact of flooding.

In 2017, Hurricane Harvey left Houston underwater, killed dozens and left an estimated \$125 billion in damage. Abbott named a recovery czar after the storm and wants to "future-proof" the Texas coast, but attention on the issue has faded.

Governors in New York and New Jersey pushed for changes after Superstorm Sandy devastated the region in 2012.

In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, signed a law requiring sea level rise projections to be used whenever the state considers approvals or funding for projects. Then-New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a Republican, pushed policies to buy homes in some flood-prone areas, although environmentalists criticized him for not addressing climate change.

Those groups cheered last year when Democrat Phil Murphy was elected to replace Christie, but they have been critical of him too since, saying he's not taking action to address global warming.

Earlier this month, Murphy experienced the perils of falling short on the basics of emergency preparedness when an early season snowstorm hit without plows at the ready, bringing roads and the transit system to a standstill and stranding thousands of commuters.

He was hit with waves of criticism, and his transportation commissioner was forced to apologize.

Murphy said it was too simplistic to say his administration "dropped the ball." But he added, "The buck stops with me, period."

Associated Press writers Dan Elliott in Denver; Tom Verdin in Sacramento, California; David Warren in Dallas; and Paul J. Weber in Austin, Texas, contributed to this article.

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Memos to Nobody: Inside the work of a neglected fed agency

By JULIET LINDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mark Robbins gets to work at 8:15 each morning and unlocks the door to his office suite. He switches on the lights and the TV news, brews a pot of coffee and pulls out the first files of the day to review.

For the next eight hours or so, he reads through federal workplace disputes, analyzes the cases, marks them with notes and logs his legal opinions. When he's finished, he slips the files into a cardboard box and carries them into an empty room where they will sit and wait. For nobody.

He's at 1,520 files and counting.

Such is the lot of the last man standing in this forgotten corner of Donald Trump's Washington. For nearly two years, while Congress has argued and the White House has delayed, Robbins has waited to be sent some colleagues to read his work and rule on the cases. No one has arrived. So he toils in vain, writing memos into the void.

Robbins is a one-man microcosm of a current strand of government dysfunction. His office isn't a high-

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profile political target. No politician has publicly pledged to slash his budget. But his agency's work has effectively been neutered through neglect. Promising to shrink the size of government, the president has been slow to fill posts and the Republican-led Congress has struggled to win approval for nominees. The combined effect isn't always dramatic, but it's strikingly clear when examined up close.

"It's a series of unfortunate events," says Robbins, who has had plenty of time to contemplate the absurdity of his situation. Still, he doesn't blame Trump or the government for his predicament. "There's no one thing that created this problem that could have been fixed. It was a series of things randomly thrown together to create where we are."

Robbins is a member of the Merit Systems Protection Board, a quasi-judicial federal body designed to determine whether civil servants have been mistreated by their employers. The three members are presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed for staggered seven-year terms. After one member termed out in 2015 and a second did so in January 2017, both without replacements lined up, Robbins became the sole member and acting chairman. The board needs at least two members to decide cases.

That's a problem for the federal workers and whistleblowers whose 1,000-plus grievances hang in the balance, stalled by the board's inability to settle them. When Robbins' term ends on March 1, the board probably will sit empty for the first time in its 40-year history.

It's also a problem for Robbins. A new board, whenever it's appointed and approved, will start from scratch. That means while new members can read Robbins' notes, his thousand-plus decisions will simply vanish.

"There is zero chance, zero chance my votes will count," the 59-year-old lawyer says, running his fingers over the spines leather-bound volumes lined up neatly on a shelf. Inside are the board's published rulings. None of the opinions he's working on will make it into one of them.

"Imagine having the last year and half of your work just ... disappear," he said.

Despite the choke of files piled up everywhere else, Robbins' office is remarkably orderly. Three paperweights rest on stacks of papers on his desk: a stone from Babel province, a memento from his time working for the State Department in Iraq; a model of the White House, to commemorate his tenure under Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush; and a medallion bearing the merit board's seal. This job, which pays about \$155,000 a year, "has been the honor of my life," he says.

In the corner, a potted plant he rescued from a trash can outside his condo six years ago is now so tall that it's bumping up against the ceiling, growing in circles.

He swears it's not a metaphor.

Robbins, a Republican, was excited when Trump won the election. The president chooses two board members of his or her own party, and the Senate minority leader picks a third. Robbins assumed he'd finally be in the majority after years of serving alongside Democrats, soon able to write opinions rather than just logging dissent.

No such luck.

Trump was in office a year before he nominated two board members, a pair of Republicans, including Robbins' replacement. A third nominee, a Democrat, was named three months later, in June.

Assuming they'd be swiftly confirmed, Robbins quickly began preparing for their arrival, leaving customized notes with comments and suggestions for the nominees based on their distinct personalities and experience on each case.

He'd at least impart a little wisdom, he thought.

But months went by and still no vote. Robbins said he was told the Democrats were refusing to confirm the two Republicans by unanimous consent, insisting instead on a full debate for each. In late September, the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs subcommittee that screens nominees told Robbins it probably would not be able to confirm the appointees before the end of the current Congress. That meant that the entire process, which typically takes several months when there are no complications, will begin again come January, with no guarantee the nominees will be the same.

Now his pile of personalized sticky notes is bound for the trash, too.

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Tall, slim and bald, Robbins is an eternal optimist. He sees the futility of the piles of paper and empty offices. But he's determined to keep the trains running, even if he's the only one on the ride.

"It's not like I'm sitting around on the sofa watching soap operas and eating bonbons. I'm still doing my job," he said. "It's only when the agency stops working that people realize what we do and the value we bring."

"Maybe someday they'll say, 'Good old Robbins, he just kept plugging along.'"

Frustrating? Yes. But at least it makes for a good story at parties.

"When I say to people, 'And then my votes just disappear,' the crowd usually goes 'Oh, no!'" he said. "And there's empathy, there's real empathy."

The board, established in 1978, is responsible for protecting 2.1 million federal employees from bias and unfair treatment in the workplace. The board handles appeals from whistleblowers and other civil servants who say they were mistreated or wrongly fired, and want to challenge an initial ruling by an administrative judge. The board also conducts independent research and writes policy papers destined for the president's desk.

Or it used to.

Robbins is quick to point out the staffing crisis began under President Barack Obama, back when Robbins' first colleague termed out without a replacement.

Others say it's the Trump administration's fault.

Trump has lagged slightly behind his predecessors in nominating political appointees. As of Nov. 19, he had nominated people for 929 positions, compared with Obama's 984 and Bush's 1,128 at the same point in their presidencies. Congress has acted on just 69 percent of those nominations, according to data provided by the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan organization promoting government efficiency.

Max Stier, the partnership's CEO, blames the administration, the Senate and a dysfunctional system of appointing and confirming political nominees.

"There are many different flavors of the same problem," he said. He cited several other vacancies, including assistant secretary for South Asian affairs at the State Department, deputy secretary and undersecretary for health at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the deputy secretary at the Homeland Security Department, among others. "There is so much going on, but the underlying reality is that our basic government is suffering."

John Palguta, former director of policy and evaluation for the merit board, called the delay "outrageous."

"We're setting a new standard, and it's particularly severe and unfortunate at MSPB because of the structure of the agency. It just can't operate. And to let it go for this long, that's really unconscionable," Palguta said. "The administration simply hasn't done its job."

Sen. James Lankford, who chairs the Senate Home Security and Government Affairs' Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management said in a statement he understands the urgency in filling these positions.

"There are over 1,500 individuals waiting for their cases to be heard, but there are not board members in place which means the backlog cannot be addressed," said Lankford, R-Okla.

Robbins keeps plugging away and the cases keep piling up.

"We are running out of space," he said, shimmying between towers of boxes in a storage closet close to 6 feet tall. More boxes are stacked against the hallway wall and piled up in the clerk's office.

"Any additional cases I work from now on are just, grains of sand on a beach."

French protesters angry over fuel taxes clash with police

By THOMAS ADAMSON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French police fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse violent demonstrators in Paris on Saturday, as thousands gathered in the capital and beyond and staged road blockades to vent anger against rising fuel taxes.

Thousands of police were deployed nationwide to contain the eighth day of deadly demonstrations that

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started as protests against tax but morphed into a rebuke of President Emmanuel Macron and the perceived elitism of France's ruling class. Two people have been killed since Nov. 17 in protest-related tragedies.

Tense clashes on the Champs-Elysees that ended by dusk Saturday saw police face off with demonstrators who burned plywood, wielded placards reading "Death to Taxes" and upturned a large vehicle.

At least 19 people, including four police officers, were slightly hurt and one person had more serious injuries in the day of unrest in Paris, according to police.

Macron responded in a strongly worded tweet: "Shame on those who attacked (police). Shame on those who were violent against other citizens ... No place for this violence in the Republic."

Police said that dozens of protesters were detained for "throwing projectiles," among other acts. By nightfall the Champs-Elysees was smoldering and in the Place de la Madeleine, burned scooters lay on the sidewalk like blackened shells.

"It's going to trigger a civil war and me, like most other citizens, we're all ready," said Benjamin Vrignaud, a 21-year-old protester from Chartres.

"They take everything from us. They steal everything from us," said 21-year-old Laura Cordonnier.

The famed avenue was speckled with plumes of smoke and neon — owing to the color of the vests the self-styled "yellow jacket" protesters don. French drivers are required to keep neon security vests in their vehicles.

Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said that 8,000 protesters flooded the Champs-Elysees at the demonstration's peak and there were nearly 106,000 protesters and 130 arrests in total nationwide.

Castaner denounced protesters from the far-right whom he called "rebellious," as he accused National Assembly leader Marine Le Pen of encouraging them.

But the Interior Ministry played down the scale of Saturday's demonstrations by highlighting that up to 280,000 people took part in last Saturday's protest.

The unrest is proving a major challenge for embattled Macron, who's suffering in the polls.

The leader, who swept to power only last year, is the focus of rage for the "yellow jacket" demonstrators who accuse the pro-business centrist of elitism and indifference to the struggles of ordinary French.

Macron has so far held strong and insisted the fuel tax rises are a necessary pain to reduce France's dependence on fossil fuels and fund renewable energy investments — a cornerstone of his reforms of the nation. He will defend fresh plans to make the "energy transition" easier next week.

Paris deployed some 3,000 security forces on Saturday, notably around tourist-frequented areas, after an unauthorized attempt last week to march on the presidential Elysee Palace.

Police officials said that a no-go zone, set up around key areas including the presidential palace and the National Assembly on the Left Bank of the Seine River, has not been breached.

But authorities are struggling because the movement has no clear leader and has attracted a motley group of people with broadly varying demands.

The anger is mainly over a hike in the diesel fuel tax, which has gone up seven euro cents per liter (nearly 30 U.S. cents per gallon) and will keep climbing in coming years, according to Transport Minister Elisabeth Borne. The tax on gasoline is also to increase four euro cents. Gasoline currently costs about 1.64 euros a liter in Paris (\$7.06 a gallon), slightly more than diesel.

Far left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon explained to BFMTV the historical importance of this issue in the Gallic mindset: "When tax is no longer agreed to, it's the start of revolutions in France."

Chris Den Hond and Patrick Hermensen contributed to this report.

Global Catholic nuns urge reporting of sex abuse to police

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Catholic Church's global organization of nuns has denounced the "culture of silence and secrecy" surrounding sexual abuse in the church and is urging sisters who have been abused to report the crimes to police and their superiors.

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The International Union of Superiors General, which represents more than 500,000 sisters worldwide, vowed to help nuns who have been abused to find the courage to report it, and pledged to help victims heal and seek justice.

The statement, issued on the eve of the U.N.-designated International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, was the first from the Rome-based UISG since the abuse scandal erupted anew this year and as the sexual abuse of adult nuns by clergymen has also come to light. The Associated Press reported earlier this year that the Vatican has known for decades about the problem of priests and bishops preying on nuns, but has done next to nothing to stop it.

In the statement Friday, the UISG didn't specify clergy as the aggressors. While such abuse is well known in parts of Africa, and an Indian case of the alleged rape of a nun by a bishop is currently making headlines, there have also been cases of sexual abuse committed by women against other women within congregations.

The UISG statement was broad, condemning what it called the "pattern of abuse that is prevalent within the church and society today," citing sexual, verbal and emotional abuse as types of mistreatment that festers in unequal power relations and demeans the dignity of its victims.

"We condemn those who support the culture of silence and secrecy, often under the guise of 'protection' of an institution's reputation or naming it 'part of one's culture,'" the group said.

"We advocate for transparent civil and criminal reporting of abuse whether within religious congregations, at the parish or diocesan levels, or in any public arena," the statement said.

To mark the U.N. day calling for an end to violence against women, the head of the Italian bishops' conference, Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti, issued a video message on the subject - but didn't mention sexual violence against sisters by fellow clergymen, evidence of how taboo the subject is within the church hierarchy.

An AP investigation found that cases of priest abusing nuns have emerged in Europe, Africa, South America and Asia, underscoring how sisters' second class status in the church has contributed to a power imbalance where women can be mistreated by men with near impunity.

While some nuns are finding their voices, buoyed by the #MeToo movement, many victims remain reluctant to come forward. Experts told AP sisters have a well-founded fear they won't be believed and will instead be painted as the seducer who corrupted the priest. Often the sister who denounces abuse by a priest is punished, including with expulsion from her congregation, while the priest's vocation is preserved at all cost.

The Vatican has known for years about the problem in Africa after a series of major studies were commissioned in the 1990s. Religious sisters reported that African nuns were being particularly targeted by priests seeking to avoid HIV transmission from prostitutes or other women.

In the wake of the AP report, the umbrella organization of U.S. sisters, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, urged sisters who had been abused to report to both civil and church authorities. Many of the LCWR's members also belong to the global UISG, which can provide a point of contact with the Vatican.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 25, the 329th day of 2018. There are 36 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 25, 1963, the body of President John F. Kennedy was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery; his widow, Jacqueline, lighted an "eternal flame" at the gravesite.

On this date:

In 1783, the British evacuated New York during the Revolutionary War.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Confederate agents set a series of arson fires in New York; the blazes

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were quickly extinguished.

In 1915, a new version of the Ku Klux Klan, targeting blacks, Jews, Catholics and immigrants, was founded by William Joseph Simmons.

In 1940, the cartoon character Woody Woodpecker made his debut in the animated short "Knock Knock."

In 1947, movie studio executives meeting in New York agreed to blacklist the "Hollywood Ten" who'd been cited for contempt of Congress the day before.

In 1961, the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise, was commissioned.

In 1986, the Iran-Contra affair erupted as President Ronald Reagan and Attorney General Edwin Meese revealed that profits from secret arms sales to Iran had been diverted to Nicaraguan rebels.

In 1987, Harold Washington, the first black mayor of Chicago, died in office at age 65.

In 1999, Elian Gonzalez, a 5-year-old Cuban boy, was rescued by a pair of sport fishermen off the coast of Florida, setting off an international custody battle.

In 2001, as the war in Afghanistan entered its eighth week, CIA officer Johnny "Mike" Spann was killed during a prison uprising in Mazar-e-Sharif, becoming America's first combat casualty of the conflict.

In 2002, President George W. Bush signed legislation creating the Department of Homeland Security, and appointed Tom Ridge to be its head.

In 2016, Fidel Castro, who led his rebels to victorious revolution in 1959, embraced Soviet-style communism and defied the power of 10 U.S. presidents during his half-century of rule in Cuba, died at age 90.

Ten years ago: President-elect Barack Obama said economic recovery efforts would trump deficit concerns after he took office in January; at the same time, Obama pledged a "page-by-page, line-by-line" budget review to root out unneeded spending. Former NFL quarterback Michael Vick pleaded guilty to a Virginia dogfighting charge, receiving a three-year suspended sentence.

Five years ago: Pushing back against critics, President Barack Obama forcefully defended the temporary agreement to freeze Iran's disputed nuclear program, declaring that the United States "cannot close the door on diplomacy." Prosecutors closed their yearlong investigation into the shooting rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, that claimed the lives of 26 victims; their report said the motive of gunman Adam Lanza, who also killed his mother and himself, might never be known.

One year ago: On what was designated as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, President Emmanuel Macron launched an initiative to combat violence and harassment against women in France and change what he described as France's sexist culture. A volcano on the Indonesian island of Bali rumbled to life, temporarily disrupting some international flights to the popular tourist destination. Veteran Hollywood actor Rance Howard, the father of director Ron Howard, died at the age of 89.

Today's Birthdays: Playwright Murray Schisgal is 92. Actress Kathryn Crosby is 85. Actor Christopher Riordan is 81. Pro Football Hall of Fame coach Joe Gibbs is 78. Singer Bob Lind is 76. Author, actor and economist Ben Stein is 74. Actor John Larroquette is 71. Actor Tracey Walter is 71. Movie director Jonathan Kaplan is 71. Author Charlaine Harris is 67. Retired MLB All-Star Bucky Dent is 67. Dance judge Bruno Tonioli (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 63. Singer Amy Grant is 58. Former NFL quarterback Bernie Kosar is 55. Rock musician Eric Grossman (K's Choice) is 54. Rock singer Mark Lanegan is 54. Rock singer-musician Tim Armstrong is 53. Actor Steve Harris is 53. Actor Billy Burke is 52. Singer Stacy Lattisaw is 52. Rock musician Rodney Sheppard (Sugar Ray) is 52. Rapper-producer Erick Sermon is 50. Actress Jill Hennessy is 49. Actress Christina Applegate is 47. Actor Eddie Steeples is 45. Actress Kristian Nairn is 43. Former NFL quarterback Donovan McNabb is 42. Actress Jill Flint is 41. Actor Jerry Ferrara is 39. Actor Joel Kinnaman is 39. Actress Valerie Azlynn is 38. Former first daughter Barbara Pierce Bush is 37. Former first daughter Jenna Bush Hager is 37. Actress Katie Cassidy is 32. Contemporary Christian singer Jamie Grace is 27.

Thought for Today: "The great man is he who does not lose his child's heart." — Mencius, Chinese philosopher (371 B.C.-289 B.C.).